

Message Text

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12

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-02 AID-05 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01

/058 W

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R 131826Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8600

INFO AMCONSUL CALI

AMCONSUL MEDELLIN

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: SEDU; CO

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT INTERVENES IN LOCAL UNIVERSITY CRISIS

REF BOGOTA 4338

1. PRESIDENT LOPEZ IN RESPONSE TO THE DIRECTORS OF THE JORGE TADEO LOZANO UNIVERSITY (SEE REFTEL SENT THEM A LETTER DESIGNED TO EASE TENSIONS. THE PRESIDENT AVOIDED COMMENT ON THE MINISTER OF EDUCATIONS ENTIRE "NEW CONCEPT" OF EDUCATION AND THE ROLE OF PRIVATE SCHOOLS, BUT HE DID SUPPORT THE MINISTER'S CONTENTION THAT EDUCATION IS A PUBLIC

SERVICE AND THAT THE GOVERNMENT THEREFORE IS OBLIGATED TO OVERSEE THE SCHOOLS, BOTH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE. HE ALSO BACKED THE MINISTER'S DECISION NOT ALLOWPPE THE CLOSING OF THE TADEO LOZANO.

2. THE PRESIDENT REVEALED THAT THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION OFFERED HIS RESIGNATION AS A STEP TOWARD A SOLUTION TO THE TADEO LOZANO CRISIS BUT

THE OFFER WAS REFUSED. AT THE SAME TIME THE PRESIDENT CALLED UPON THE RECTOR OF THE TADEVWLOZANO TO WITHDRAW HIS RESIGNATION AND JOIN IN SEEKING A SOLUTION. LOPEZ ENCOURAGED STUDENTS AND ADMINISTRATION TO INVOKE AGAIN THE AGREEMENT REACHED IN EARLY APRIL AND

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OFFERED THE GOOD

OFFICES OF THE GOVERNMENT TO ASSIST
IN WORKING OUT A PERMANENT SETTLEMENT.

3. WE BELIEVE THE PRESIDENTS LETTER WILL SOOTH RUFFLED
FEATHERS AND HELP PAVE THE WAY FOR A SETTLEMENT OF THE TADEO
LOZANO CRISIS. THE LETTER ALSO INDICATES THAT THE GOVERNMENT
HAD DECIDED TO KEEP A CLOSER WATCH ON PRIVATE EDUCATION AND THIS
GOES HAND IN HAND WITH A DECISION OF TWO MONTHS AGO TO PLACE A
GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVE ON BOARDS OF DIRECTORS OF ALL PRIVATE
UNIVERSITIES. OBVIOUSLY, THE LARGE PRIVATE EDUCATION COMMUNITY
WILL NOT ENJOY THE FREEDOM OF ACTION IT ONCE DID, BUT THE ABSENCE
OF PRESIDENTIAL COMMENT ON THE MINISTER'S "NEW CONCEPT" OF
EDUCATION LEAVES OPEN THE QUESTION OF HOW FAR THE GOVERNMENT
WILL GO IN IMPOSING CONTROLS.
VAKY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DISPUTES, PRESIDENT, INTERVENTION, STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS, UNIVERSITIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 MAY 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BOGOTA04386
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750168-1017
From: BOGOTA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750555/aaaabxiq.tel
Line Count: 76
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 BOGOTA 4338
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 SEP 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <05 SEP 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <17 NOV 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRESIDENT INTERVENES IN LOCAL UNIVERSITY CRISIS
TAGS: SEDU, CO, JORGE TADEO LOZANO UNIV
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006